

Sign language lacks respect in Spain, according to Powrie V. Doctor Chair



Dr. Susan Plann

After Spanish dictator Francisco Franco died in 1975, Spain rewrote its constitution to embrace the diverse languages and cultures of its several autonomous regions—languages that Franco had outlawed. However, Spain's respect for people's languages in regions such as Catalonia, Galicia, and the Basque Provinces does not extend to Spanish sign language, according to Dr. Susan Plann, Gallaudet's Powrie V. Doctor Chair of Deaf Studies from July through December 1994.

The chair, administered by Graduate Studies and Research, was established in 1971 in memory of Gallaudet Professor Powrie V. Doctor to enable prominent people to undertake projects at the University in the area of deaf studies. Plann is an associate professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is writing a book on the history of the deaf community in Spain.

Plann's Oct. 19 lecture, entitled "Linguistic Minorities in Spain Today: How Do the Deaf Fit In?," was sponsored by the Gallaudet Research Institute and the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

In Spain, Plann said, deafness is still viewed primarily as a medical condition that needs to be cured. The cure may be cochlear implants, or it may be the assimilation of deaf people into society through speechreading and speech so that they do not appear to be different.

Plann compared deaf sign language users to speakers of the regional languages of Catalonia, the Basque Provinces, or Galicia. While Catalan, Basque, and Galician speakers have the right to have their children educated bilingually in their regional language and the national language of Spain, Castilian, sign language users have no such rights. Basque, Catalan,

and Galician also may be used in court, in professional work, and in business, but sign language may not.

Plann also quoted from a book about the deaf community in Spain by a deaf author who wrote that "the deaf person marginalizes himself" into the deaf community and that "sign language sets up an involuntary barrier" to the larger, hearing community. Plann pointed out the negativity in these statements as compared to views of a hypothetical Basque speaker. "[They] view their language not as a barrier, but as a bond," she said. The attitudes that prevail are that Basque people choose to associate mostly with other Basque speakers, but that deaf people who use sign language are unable to communicate with the larger, hearing population and so are forced to socialize in their own group.

In addition, a law that Spain passed in the 1980s, comparable to the U.S. Individuals with Disabilities Education

continued on page 2



Graduate student Michele Rovins (second from right) leads a deaf awareness workshop held by SEHS and the Gallaudet chapter of Kappa Delta Pi at Georgetown University's Medical School.

Students learn about deaf patients

Seeing a doctor can be frustrating for a deaf person who does not have an interpreter present.

To help the next generation of medical practitioners understand what is needed to communicate with prospective deaf patients, a group of students and recent graduates from Gallaudet's School of Education and

Human Services (SEHS) recently helped educate a group of Washington, D.C., area medical students about deaf people.

Michele Rovins, a second-year graduate student in education, said that the SEHS effort was initiated after she was contacted by a student at Georgetown University. The student, who is president of the American Medical Student Association (AMSA), wanted Rovins' help in setting up a deaf awareness workshop for AMSA members.

Students in the AMSA chapter at George Washington University, where two medical students are deaf or hard of hearing, said Rovins, are setting up a task force to address issues related to people with disabilities. To support the effort, Georgetown University's AMSA chapter held a disability awareness week Sept. 26-Oct. 1 that included the workshop coordinated by Rovins.

For assistance, Rovins turned to Gallaudet's chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, a national honor society in education. "[Kappa Delta Pi was] really supportive," said Rovins, who is vice president of the Gallaudet chapter.

At the Oct. 1 workshop at Georgetown University Medical School, the presenters discussed using interpreters and how to make deaf people comfortable in a medical setting.

Because more than 90 percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents, the future physicians were encouraged to accentuate the positive when informing parents of a child's hearing loss, including recommending that the family learn sign language. The medical students also role-played doctors informing parents. The students were urged to arrange for deaf adults to contact hearing parents of deaf children as soon as the diagnosis of deafness is made, to help them get the information

continued on page 2

KDES students tackle recycling effort

"Beverage cans thrown away by Americans in one month would reach to the moon if stacked end to end." This quote, from a poster in the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School Primary Department, exemplifies why KDES students are energetically recycling waste products and learning not to pollute or fill up landfills with recyclable materials.

For three years, Middle School students in the Special Opportunities Program (SOP) have been recycling at KDES. This year they were joined by students in primary teacher Judith Giannotti's class.

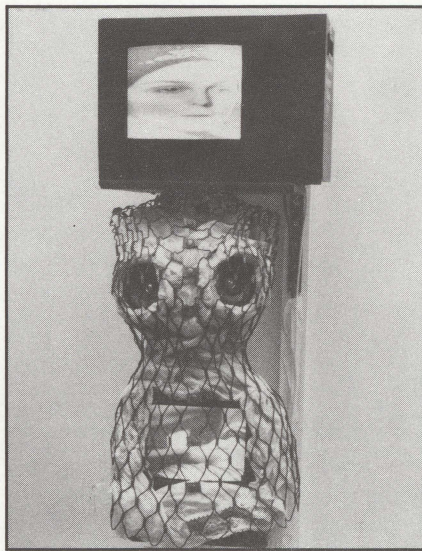
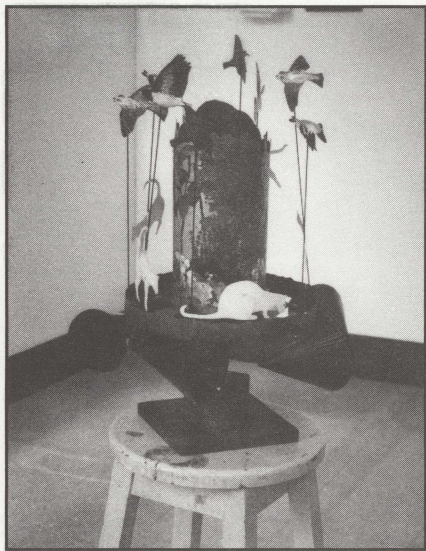
"A lot of students are going home and encouraging their parents to do it too," because they have learned how important it is to not pollute or fill up landfills, said Frank Turk, a computer/media specialist in the KDES Learning Resource Center, who launched the recycling effort five years ago and facilitates the program today. One SOP student even brings aluminum beverage cans from home for recycling.

When Turk began recycling, for two years he collected recyclable waste and drove it to the University

continued on page 2



KDES primary teacher Judith Giannotti watches while recyclable material is deposited in bins by her class (from left): Raimondas Doblmeier, Maria Rogers, and Joseph Richmond. (Not pictured is student Andrew Magill.)



The campus community is invited to a reception and lecture Nov. 10 at 3 p.m. in Washburn Arts Building, Room 203, by Linda Lewett, one of two artists whose works are on exhibit through Nov. 18 in Washburn Arts Gallery. Susan Wood's whimsical sculptures (left) reflect everyday life experiences; Lewett's video installation (right) combines personal and commercial images of women's physical appearances. The exhibit is made possible by a faculty development grant.

Announcements

The Staff Advisory Committee is accepting nominations for five vacant positions at Kendall Green. Staff from either campus can be candidates for these openings. Nomination forms, which will be mailed in the near future, must be returned to SAC representatives by Nov. 4. The election will be held on Nov. 15. For more information, contact Barbara Hunt, x5031.

The Holiday Crafts Fair, an annual event sponsored by the University Center, will be held this year on Nov. 18 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Hughes Gym. The fair offers the opportunity for talented members of the campus community to show and sell their handiwork. To reserve a vending space, applications and fees—\$15 for individual students and \$20 for all others—must be submitted to the University Center by Nov. 4. (Note: Electrical outlets will not be provided.) For more information, call x5144.

Kendall Demonstration Elementary School is asking for support during its

participation in the annual Giant "Apples for the Students" and Safeway "Tapes for Education" cash register receipt drives. The programs provide computers, software, and sports equipment to schools in exchange for receipts from the stores. Receipts can be deposited in the collection box near the Ely Center information desk or sent to Bill Humm or Leslie Brewer at KDES.

Gallaudet's Cheverly, Md., residents are invited to St. Ambrose School's sixth annual craft fair on Nov. 5 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission is free. The school is located at 6310 Jason St. For information, call (301) 773-3546 (Voice).

Deaf awareness workshop held

continued from page 1
and advice needed and to become more comfortable with having deaf children. "It is really important for new parents of deaf children to meet deaf adults as soon as possible," Rovins emphasized.

The medical students also were cautioned not to begin examinations before an interpreter arrives, and to talk directly to patients instead of to their interpreters. Unless the deaf person clearly understands what is happening, confusion can result, said Rovins.

The medical students were enthusiastic, said Rovins. They expressed the desire to learn sign language and visit Gallaudet. A student planning to work in a farming community, where he would see adults deafened by farm machinery, asked about support services for late-deafened adults. Others said they would definitely request interpreters for medical appointments with deaf people.

The SEHS workshop presenters were praised by SEHS Dean David Martin for their efforts to educate medical students on deafness. "This kind of constructive outreach is an excellent example of the service emphasis within our honor society in education," commented Dr. Martin, who as Honor Society chapter counselor also assisted in the presentation. "I am very proud of the quality and depth of the information that our students and graduates provided for these future doctors."

Plann discusses sign language in Spain

continued from page 1

Act, requires "preventive care, treatment, rehabilitation, and integration," of children with disabilities, said Plann. Integration, like U.S. mainstreaming policies, has led to the closing of schools for deaf students. Although these schools followed oralist philosophies, they were where most deaf children learned sign language and were exposed to deaf culture on the playground and in the dorms.

Recently, however, deaf people in Spain began demanding their rights as linguistic and cultural minorities. Plann reported that in Catalonia the regional parliament has approved a committee

to study recognition of Catalanian sign, a first step toward having it declared as an official language of that region. Catalonia also has passed legislation guaranteeing bilingual education that includes sign language, if parents request it, she said. And in Madrid recently, 3,500 deaf people turned out to demonstrate for recognition of Spanish sign as an official language of their nation.

Plann will speak about Roberto Pradez, Spain's first deaf teacher of deaf people, whom she described as on par with Laurent Clerc as a historical figure in deaf education, on Nov. 17 at 4 p.m. (Location to be announced.)

Students learn from recycling project

continued from page 1

of Maryland's recycling center. As his workload increased, Turk decided to solicit the help of others at KDES, and he helped establish a recycling committee at the school.

Once a week, 20 students wheel a cart through KDES, collecting waste materials from the recycling bins. Turk estimates that in one year, 100 pounds of aluminum and 200 pounds of glass or newspapers are recycled.

The materials are then turned in for payment at recycling centers, and the earnings go to the SOP Department. During the year, the department spends the recycling earnings, which average about \$200 annually. The earnings are spent to buy food or clothing, reinforcing the students' independent living skills, such as tipping and paying sales tax. "We strongly feel that the money earned should benefit the kids—they earned it," said SOP teacher Elizabeth Hall.

Classified Ads

Classified ads are printed for Gallaudet faculty and staff. Written ads must be submitted in person or by mail to *On the Green*, MSSD, Room G-37. Off-campus phone numbers must include an area code and whether the number is voice or TTY. In compliance with the Education of the Deaf Act of 1992, as amended, payment of \$1 per ad per printing must accompany each ad. The deadline for submitting ads is Friday, 10 days before the desired publication. Ads received Oct. 31-Nov. 4 will be printed Nov. 14.

FOR SALE: Brown couch, \$150/BO; black kitchen table w/matching set of 4 padded chairs, \$65/BO; night table w/2 drawers, \$20/BO. Call x5671 or E-mail ALSHETTLE.

FOR SALE: Girl's 16-in. bike w/training wheels, \$20; girl's 20-in. bike, \$25; student desk, \$30. Call x5281 or E-mail JLBLOUNT.

FOR SALE: Boy's Harley Davidson Thunder Rider (for ages 3-5), less than a year old, \$75/BO; boy's 16-in. bike, 1 year old, \$50/BO. Call x5281 or E-mail JLBLOUNT.

FOR RENT: Apt. in walking distance to Kendall Green, 2-BR, new carpet, fresh paint. Call Ms. Gaither, (301) 774-9719.

FOR RENT: Apt. in private Takoma Park, Md., home, to mature nonsmoker, 15 to 20 min. to Kendall Green, near public trans., no pets, avail. Nov. 1, \$595/mo. incl. util., Call (301) 585-7306 or E-mail LARACH.

FOR RENT: House in Cheverly, Md., near Metro, 3 acres, garage, 5 BRs, basement, greenhouse room, W/D, fireplace, porch, and deck, \$1,295/mo. Call (301) 937-8660.

FOR RENT: 1- and 2-BR apts. and 1-BR accessible apts. in Washington, D.C., W/D, near Metro bus/shopping, rent incl. util. For more information, call Deaf REACH housing specialist (202) 832-6681 (V/TTY) or Southview Apts., (202) 889-6660.

WANTED: House cleaning work, days or eves. Call Ann, (301) 794-7690 (TTY).

WANTED: Sign language tutor for beginning ASL student, immediately. E-mail IISALEXANDER.

Job Openings

Some of the advertised positions may already be filled. The list below includes only new staff and faculty openings and does not represent all jobs available. To get a recorded message describing the complete list, call x5358 (V) or x5359 (TTY).

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS: Alumni Relations

GROUNDKEEPER: Grounds Services

October 31, 1994



Published each Monday for the staff and faculty of Gallaudet University by the Department of Publications and Production.

Editor

Todd Byrd

Editorial Staff

Lynne McConnell
Andrea Shettle
Jamie Berke

Photography Staff

Chun Louie
Joan Schlub

Typesetting

Thomas Corcoran



Gallaudet University is an equal opportunity employer/educational institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, hearing status, disability, covered veteran status, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, source of income, place of business or residence, pregnancy, childbirth, or any other unlawful basis.